

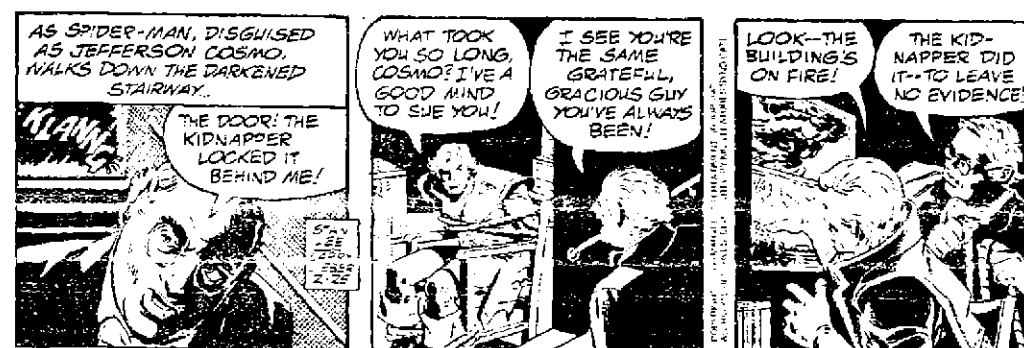
BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



9 CHICKWEED LANE



ANDY CAPP



ROSE IS ROSE



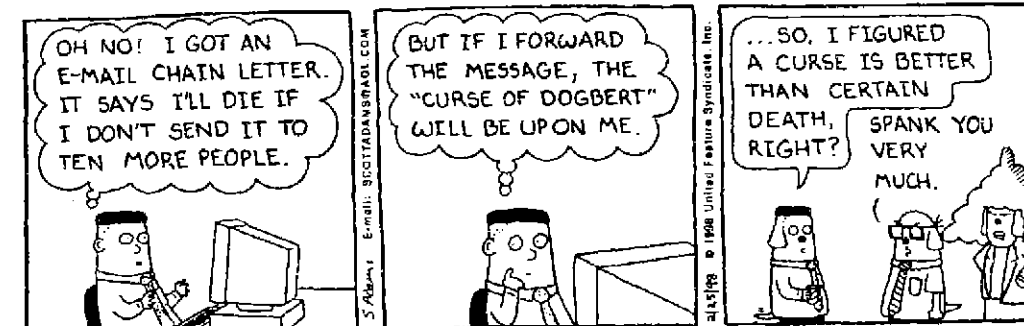
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM



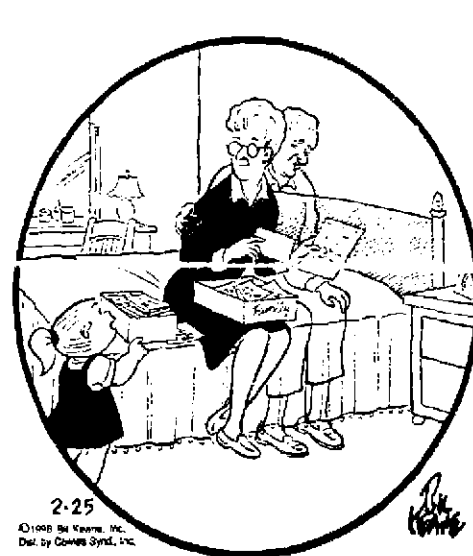
DILBERT



DENNIS THE MENACE



FAMILY CIRCUS



RHYMES WITH ORANGE



RALPH



Today's Birthdays

Country singer Ralph Stanley is 71. Actor Tom Courtenay is 51. CBS newsmen Bob Schieffer is 61. Rock singer-musician Harrison is 55. Talk show host Sally Jessy Raphael is 55. Actress Karen Grassle ("Little House on the Prairie") is 54. Movie director Neil Jordan ("The Crying Game") is 48. Actress Veronique Webb is 33. Actress Tea Leoni ("The Naked Truth") is 32. Actor Sean Astin is 27.

I NEED HELP



Keebler funerals.

SCRABBLE

For Thursday, Feb. 26, 1998

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Don't allow thoughts of the coming weekend to impede your progress at work.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your concentration peaks early, and the afternoon hours are basically useless.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Your thoughts turn to someone from your past. However, it's not a wise idea to pick up the phone.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Some begin a new diet. In general, it's a good time to turn your thoughts to your appearance.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) You go out of your way to make a new co-worker comfortable. This gesture is very much appreciated.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Change and a state of flux are in the stars for you. Some could be moving to a new home.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Your mind is working overtime. Fortunately, those ideas are golden. You can translate them into money-makers.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You're good at what you do. However, you need to believe that as much as others do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Someone is rubbing you the wrong way by not thinking before speaking. Simply ignore it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) A work project meets more success if you make it a group effort. By sharing your skills, you and your co-workers quickly get the job done.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Jealousy definitely doesn't become you. In fact, it's a basically alien feeling for you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) You discover something very unusual while reading. Perhaps you should do more of this.

PAR SCORE 130-140
by JUDD

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanket" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Merriam Webster) and OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW.

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

BACK 1: Z, B, A, A, O, O, K (Triple Word Score)

BACK 2: T, U, O, Y, M, H, U

BACK 3: N, I, U, P, G, A, R

BACK 4: N, R, L, E, E, S, D (Double Word Score)

For solution, see Classified.

WORD SLEUTH

Giraffes

TROLIEBYVSONKHE
BYWTERDOLJGEYW
URPNSEKIGTSDBZX
VSQDFORMKNEIGEC
SNROHKATYAVWUSO
PEONLCSJANLHFAE
HHVEGETARIANCCA
YXVALNUSOMCPDIN
MKJLEHFLUBAURW
ECAPOLLAGRZCFO
YTXVUDRAPOLEMAC

Tuesday's unlisted clue: EGGS

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions—forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Wednesday's unlisted clue hint: CHEWED BY A GIRAFFE

Acacia tree Camelopard Hoofed Ruminant
Africa Cow Horns Tallest
Bull Gallop Leaves Vegetarian
Caives Herds Neck

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For solution, see Classified.

ACES ON BRIDGE

By Bobby Wolff

One look at dummy tells West it is time for desperate measures. It's obvious he must develop two defensive spade winners before dummy's clubs are established. What should he lead at trick two? South's weak two-bid promised 6-10 HCP and a good six-card suit. Opposite such a hand, North had good reason to jump to game after West's overall. After West cashed his diamond king, he could see no hope unless East had a club trick (the club king). The club trick, added to one diamond and one spade, totaled three defensive tricks. And because one more winner could come only from the spade suit, it was imperative to shift to spades. Which spade should West lead? Some would cash the ace and lead another spade, a play that could not succeed unless East had a singleton. If South had two spades, he would win dummy's king and finesse in clubs after drawing one trump. And if South had three spades, East would not have a spade to return after he won his club king. Others would lead a low spade at trick two, hoping South had three spades and East held J-10 doubleton. This would also lose. South ducks to his jack and has time to establish dummy's clubs. The winning shift at trick two is the queen of spades. This wins whenever East has J-x or 10-x. South wins dummy's king, and East unblocks his honor (a key play). Now, when East wins his club king, he returns his low spade to let West capture South's jack, and the game goes one down.

NORTH 62-25 A
♠ K 8 3
♥ A Q 8
♦ J
♣ A Q J 10 8 5

WEST EAST
♠ A Q 9 6 4 ♠ 10 2
♥ 4 3 ♥ 7 6
♦ A K 9 4 ♦ 10 8 7 6 3 2
♣ 6 3 ♣ K 7 2

SOUTH
♠ J 7 5
♥ K J 10 9 5 2
♦ Q 3
♣ 9 4

Interpretation: East-West
Dealer: South

The bidding:
South West North East
2♥ 2♣ 4♥ All pass
* weak two-bid

Opening lead: Diamond king

N.Y. TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 0114

ACROSS

- 1 Lose freshness, as lettuce
- 5 Scenery chewers
- 9 Necklace securer
- 14 Coniess
- 15 "Napoleon" director Gance
- 16 Dutch government seat, with "The"
- 17 Amos or Spelling
- 18 Instrument shaped like a 69-Across
- 19 Undisguised
- 20 Cereal secrets?
- 23 It may be beaten or bucked

- 24 Billy was one
- 25 Santa —
- 28 Beach robe
- 33 Tyleneol target
- 37 Yours and mine
- 39 Razz
- 40 Cereal principle of government?
- 43 Doughnut-shaped
- 44 Helpless?
- 45 Three-handed card game
- 46 Bit of fabric
- 48 Kind of admiral
- 50 Legendary sleeper
- 52 Be a dilettante
- 57 Celebrates with cereal?
- 62 Novelist Lagerlof
- 63 24-year-old British P.M.

- 64 Wistful word
- 65 The Little Mermaid
- 66 Forearm bone
- 67 Cost of a minute call, maybe
- 68 Part of T.W.A.
- 69 Anjou or Seckel
- 70 "Up" side

DOWN

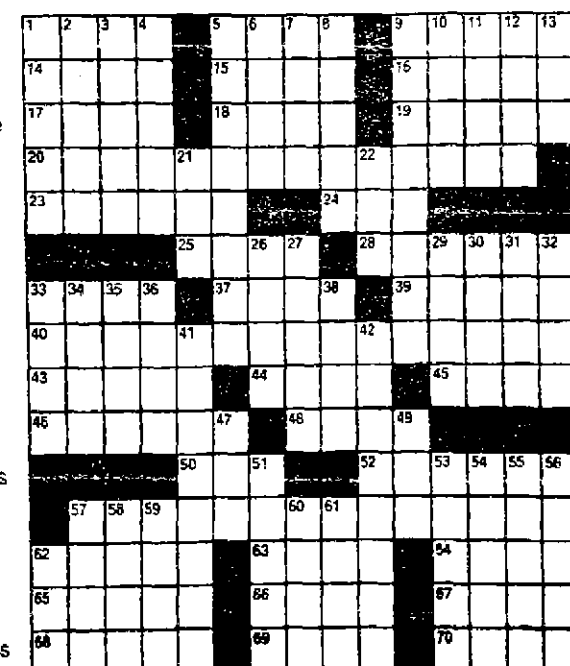
- 1 Light bulb units
- 2 Creamy white
- 3 Slow-moving lemur
- 4 Between, to bards
- 5 Henry Hudson's ship
- 6 Bump up against
- 7 John Wesley's denom.
- 8 Streamlined
- 9 Phylum humans belong to
- 10 Volcanologist's concern
- 11 Like fine wine
- 12 "Yeah, right"
- 13 Stroke
- 21 Not health
- 22 Twitch
- 26 Beer, slangily
- 27 Place for vines
- 29 Swampy spots
- 30 Equestrian gear

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

CRAPIS CLAY BAMB
PIPIIT ROSA OHIO
AGENA ERIN NODS
SADAT SNAKEEYES
TULSA ELY
PLEASE REGALED
RAD SABU ARENA
EIGHTHETHEARDWAY
SNEER MERC ITA
SERRATE LESSER
III PLUSH

ODEA RUSE ADULT
BONG ENID TESLA
ELISE DOTS ESSAY

- 32 Nutcracker suite
- 33 New Testament book



Puzzle by William C. Sullivan

- 34 Eats
- 35 Greek queen of heaven
- 36 Sartre's "No"
- 38 Shopper's delight
- 41 Savings account gains
- 42 Guiding light: star
- 47 With it
- 48 Half-time holler
- 51 High ball
- 53 Like some eyes
- 54 Contradict
- 55 Andean grazer
- 56 Twisting turns
- 57 "The King and I" co-star
- 58 Pelvic bones
- 59 Marvel superheroes
- 60 World's longest river
- 61 Sicilian smoker
- 62 Emulated Jack Horner

Answers to any three clues in this puzzle are available by touch-tone phone.

Annual subscriptions are available for the best of Sunday crosswords from the last 50 years: 1-888-7-ACROSS.